

Appl. No. 09/925,063
Amdt. May 12, 2004
Reply to Office action of March 23, 2004

Docket No. 70373-010100

REMARKS

Applicants thank Supervisory Patent Examiner Thurmond Page for the constructive discussion held on May 4th, 2004, which is the basis for the amendments and claim set presented herein. The amended claims incorporate various physical descriptions of material utilized in various claimed method steps. Accordingly, appropriate dependant claims have been deleted in light of the allowable amended independent claims submitted herein.

Please cancel, without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 24, 25, 32, 33, 44, 48, 56, 57 and 60.

Claims 21, 43-45 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

The Examiner asserts that claims 21 and 43, as previously submitted, appeared to be identical. The Examiner has noted that claim 21 recites top, center and lower rolls while claim 43 recites first, second and third rolls. Such varying recitations emphasize that the method claimed may be practiced in a "top-down" sequence (please see Figure 3) as well as run in reverse, that is, from the "bottom-up". Recitation and use of the terms top, center and lower rolls and first, second and third rolls are provided accordingly. Claim 44 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Regarding the "one step" recited in claim 45, the one step relates to the formation of the adhesive layer and lamination of the formed adhesive layer to the backing film, as recited.

All rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, have been overcome and are respectfully requested to be withdrawn.

Claims 21-28, 32-40, 42-52, 56-64 and 66 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cilento et al in combination with Sablotsky et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

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There is no teaching or suggestion found in the cited references, alone or in combination, that meet the limitations of the independent method claims. In fact, there are no method steps or manufacturing methods disclosed in the various cited references onto which the pending claims may be read upon. In fact, the only methods disclosed in the Cilento et al. patent are standard techniques in the art, (please see Col 7, lines 23-36), where "... adhesive mass is layered onto a sheet of silicone coated release paper, flattened to the desired thickness by either calendering or extruding, and a flexible backing and a flexible backing member is laminated to the other surface of the adhesive layer", which is clearly unlike the present claims. The disclosure of Sablotsky et al., in combination with Cilento et al., also fails to teach, suggest, disclose or remedy the shortcomings of Cilento et al.

Since Cilento et al. and Sablotsky et al., alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the invention as presently claimed, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the 35 U.S.C. 103 rejections of the pending claims.

Claims 29-31, 41 and 53-55 and 65 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cilento et al. in combination with Sablotsky et al. and in further combination with Godbey et al. These rejections are also respectfully traversed.

As stated in previous replies to previously asserted rejections, there is simply no disclosure to be found in Cilento et al., Sablotsky et al. and Godbey et al., alone or in combination, that actually or implicitly recite the method claims of the present application. There is no teaching to be found, for example and as recited in pending claim 45, wherein a polymeric pressure-sensitive adhesive composition is calendered between a second roll and a third roll to form a hydrocolloid dressing comprising a backing film layer and an adhesive layer, the polymeric pressure-sensitive adhesive composition is applied and calendered directly onto the backing film layer such that formation of an adhesive layer of the polymeric pressure-sensitive adhesive composition and lamination of the adhesive layer to the backing film layer is achieved in a single manufacturing step.

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Accordingly and in light of comments and discussions above and in light of the amendments discussed with Supervisory Examiner Page, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all pending 35 U.S. C. 103 rejections.

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is now in good order for allowance, and such early action is respectfully solicited. Should matters remain which the Examiner believes could be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to telephone the Applicant's undersigned agent.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any required fee in connection with the submission of this paper, any additional fees which may be required, now or in the future, or credit any overpayment to Account No. 50-2638. Please ensure that the Attorney Docket Number is referred to when charging any payments or credits for this case.

Respectfully submitted,

GREENBERG TRAURIG, LLP

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By

Claude Nassif
Claude Nassif, Ph.D.
Reg. No. 52,061
Tel.: (310) 586-7828

Greenberg Traurig, LLP
2450 Colorado Avenue, Suite 400
Santa Monica, California 90404
Telephone: 310-586-7700
Facsimile: 310-586-7800